

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00 XMB-07

OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 DRC-01 /158 W

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P 112126Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8939

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 3324

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT

SUBJ: JUNTA SPOKESMEN STRIKE DEFENSIVE ATTITUDE

1. SUMMARY. TWO SENIOR GOC OFFICIALS FELT COMPELLED JUNE 10 TO MAKE PUBLIC DEFENSE OF GOVT POLICIES, PARTICULARLY IN ECONOMIC AREA. TWO-PRONGED APPROACH REMINDED CHILEANS OF BAD OLD DAYS UNDER ALLENDE AND CITED AREAS OF "POSITIVE" ACHIEVEMENT SINCE COUP. STATEMENTS ARE APPARENT RESPONSE TO GROWING PUBLIC UNHAPPINESS OVER GENERAL ECONOMIC SITUATION AND RECENTLY ANNOUNCED AUSTERITY MEASURES (SANTIAGO 3266). END SUMMARY.

2. IN NATIONWIDE RADIO/TV ADDRESS EVENING JUNE 10, SEC GEN OF GOVT COL PEDRO EWING SHARPLY CRITICIZED THOSE CHILEANS "WHO SOW DOUBT AND UNCERTAINTY" CONCERNING GOVT'S POLICIES. IN FORCEFUL AND IMPASSIONED PLEA FOR PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF ADMITTEDLY DIFFICULT ECONOMIC SITUATION, EWING ATTACKED SHORT MEMORY OF CHILEANS AND ASKED RHETORICALLY WHERE COUNTRY WOULD BE IF UP WERE STILL IN POWER. EWING POINTED WITH PRIDE TO "POSITIVE" STEPS ALREADY TAKEN BY JUNTA SUCH AS DISTRIBUTION OF LAND TITLES, DEPOLITIZATION OF CIVIL SERVICE, AND START OF MAJOR OVERHAUL OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM. HE CONCLUDED THAT IN TERMS OF INTERNATIONAL COMMENT ON CHILEAN AFFAIRS "WE DON'T HAVE TO ACCOUNT TO ANYONE."

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3. IN SIMILAR CONTEXT, JUNTA INFORMATION ADVISER ALVARO PUGA EX-

PLAINED TO MEDIA SIGNIFICANCE OF GOVT PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN BEGUN TWO WEEKS AGO BASED ON THEME "WHAT DOES AN IRRESPONSIBLE PERSON DO?" (QUE HACE EL IRRESPONSABLE?). ACCORDING TO PUGA, CAMPAIGN IS DESIGNED TO PRICK CHILEAN CONSCIENCE CONCERNING COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SACRIFICES, REDUCE CONSUMPTION OF NON-ESSENTIAL GOODS, IMPROVE FAMILY BUDGETING HABITS, AND NOT SQUANDER RESOURCES. SAID PUGA: "IT IS A TRUE CHALLENGE TO THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH PERSON, A CALL TO THE CHILEAN PEOPLE MANY OF WHOM ARE ACCUSTOMED TO PROTESTING BUT INCAPABLE OF MAKING SUSTAINED SACRIFICES."

4. MIN ECONOMY LENIZ IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN JUNE 11 SERIES OF TEN MINUTE TV APPEARANCES AFTER THE EVENING NEWS, TO FIELD QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC ON ECONOMIC TOPICS.

5. COMMENT. TONE OF EWING AND PUGA'S REMARKS IS BOTH STRIDENT AND DEFENSIVE, INDICATING GROWING GOVT RECOGNITION OF PUBLIC UNHAPPINESS OVER ECONOMIC SITUATION AND EVIDENT DECISION TO TRY TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT THROUGH PUBLIC RELATIONS TECHNIQUES. WHILE COMBINATION OF PEP TALKS ABOUT EVENTUAL NEW ERA OF ECONOMIC HEALTH WITH RECITATION OF ALLENDE SINS WILL NOT NECESSARILY CONVINCE THOSE CAUGHT IN PRESENT SEVERE WAGE-PRICE SQUEEZE, THERE IS STILL NO INDICATION THAT ECONOMIC UNEASINESS IS BEING TRANSLATED INTO OVERT POLITICAL OPPOSITION.  
THOMPSON

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## Message Attributes

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